

# Court of Appeals Hosts Thai Judges

By OCE Public Information Office

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*Senior Circuit Judge J. Clifford Wallace discusses preparation of decisions with visiting Thai judges*

Judges of the Supreme Court of Thailand recently visited the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals as part of an educational exchange program organized by the U.S. State Department. The visitors included the vice president and secretary of the Thai Supreme Court, along with two of its chief judges. The vice president will assume the office of president of the Supreme Court of Thailand on October 1, 2005.

Senior Circuit Judge J. Clifford Wallace of San Diego, a former chief judge of the Ninth Circuit who has long been active in international judicial education efforts, served as official host for the August 11 visit. The educational exchange was arranged during a visit Judge Wallace had made to Thailand in June. He and Ninth Circuit Clerk Cathy Catterson traveled there to participate in a training program for judges of Thailand's intermediate appellate courts.

At the Court of Appeals in San Francisco, the Thai judges received presentations from court staff on case weighting, case management and the court's mediation program. They also sat in on the oral argument calendar and observed the work of judges serving on an oral screening panel. Judge Wallace also discussed the preparation of decisions.

Before visiting the Ninth Circuit, the delegation visited the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit in New Orleans, and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit in Atlanta. Their San Francisco visit also included the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California, where they were hosted by Chief District Judge Vaughn R. Walker, his fellow judges and court staff.

Thailand is governed under a constitutional monarchy with government divided into executive, intermediate appellate courts and a Supreme Court whose decisions are final, except for criminal decisions involving an appeal for clemency to the king. The Supreme Court is administered by a president, equivalent to the chief justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, and other officers.